



Paternal Acceptance as a Mediator of the Association Between Maternal Acceptance and Youth's Personality Disposition¹

(Anne Kabulü ile Gencin Kişilik Eğilimleri Arasında Baba Kabulünün Aracılığı)

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ABSTRACT

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Drawing upon interpersonal acceptance-rejection theory (IPARTheory), the present study aims to explore the associations between perceived maternal acceptance and the seven personality dispositions most central to the theory (hostility, dependence, self-esteem, self-adequacy, emotional responsiveness, emotional stability, worldview), as well as the possible mediating role of paternal acceptance. Data were collected from 551 Turkish children (50.6% boys) aged 11 through 15 (M=12.78 years) using a random sampling method. Results showed that both maternal and paternal acceptance were significant predictors of six of the seven personality dispositions most central in IPARTheory (low hostility, positive self-esteem, positive self-adequacy, emotional responsiveness, emotional stability, and positive worldview). Additionally, results showed that paternal acceptance partially mediated the association between maternal acceptance and low hostility, positive self-adequacy, emotional responsiveness, emotional stability, and positive worldview.

Key Words: Interpersonal Acceptance and Rejection Theory, maternal acceptance, paternal acceptance, personality dispositions.

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Özet

Bu çalışma, Kişilerarası Kabul-Ret Kuramını temel alarak, algılanan anne kabulü ile kuramın merkezi yedi kişilik eğilimi (düşmanlık, bağımlılık, özsaygı, öz-yeterlilik, duygusal duyarlılık, duygusal istikrar, dünya görüşü) arasındaki ilişkileri araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Ayrıca, araştırmada babanın kabulünün olası aracı rolü de incelenmektedir. Veriler, rastgele örnekleme yöntemi kullanılarak 11 ile 15 yaşları arasındaki 551 Türk çocuğundan (%50.6 erkek) toplandı (Ort. =12.78 yaş). Sonuçlar hem anne hem de baba kabulünün, Kişilerarası Kabul Ret Kuramında merkezi olan yedi kişilik eğiliminden altısının (düşük düşmanlık, pozitif özsaygı, pozitif öz-yeterlilik, duygusal duyarlılık, duygusal istikrar ve pozitif dünya görüşü) önemli yordayıcılar olduğun görülmüştür. Ayrıca, sonuçlar, baba kabulünün, anne kabulü ile düşük düşmanlık, pozitif öz-yeterlilik, duygusal duyarlılık, duygusal istikrar ve pozitif dünya görüşü arasındaki ilişkide kısmi aracı rol gördüğü bulunmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kişilerarası Kabul Ret Kuramı, anne kabul, baba kabul, kişilik eğilimleri

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Introduction

The importance of mother-father-child relationships and their effects on children's psychological and social development are well established. Numerous theories of psychology have been focused on the interactions between mother-father-child and asserted that childhood has a special place in the human life course (Freud, 1949; Bowlby, 1951; Erikson, 1961). One such theory is Parental Acceptance and Rejection Theory, recently renamed Interpersonal Acceptance and Rejection Theory (IPARTheory) developed by Ronald P. Rohner (1975). IPARTheory is "an evidence-based theory of socialization and lifespan development that attempts to predict and explain major causes, consequences, and other correlates of parental acceptance and rejection within the United States and worldwide" (Rohner, 1986). Perceived parental acceptance and rejection are the key concepts of the theory and consist of individuals' interpretation of parental behaviors. Earlier research has shown that perceived acceptance and rejection from parents have strong and independent effects on children (Rohner et al., 2005).

The theory emphasizes the warmth dimension of parenting and postulates that individuals need acceptance from people who are important to them. It has also been asserted that all humans need acceptance, regardless of culture, ethnicity, social class, language, or geographic location (Rohner, 1986). The warmth dimension is explained as the emotional bond between children and parents, and includes the parents' physical, verbal, and symbolic behaviors used to express their feelings toward their children. Importantly, warmth is a continuum with acceptance on one end and rejection on the other end. When children experience warmth, affection, comfort, nurturance, support, and love from their caregivers, they perceive acceptance. However, children perceive rejection when there are psychologically and physically hurtful behaviors, rather than positive experiences (Rohner et al., 2012).

Rejection includes four categories of parental behaviors: (1) Cold/unaffectionate, (2) hostile and aggressive, (3) indifferent and neglecting, and (4) undifferentiated rejection. Extensive research using IPARTheory has shown that rejection typically occurs as a combination of those four categories. Cold/unaffectionate parents stint their love and compassion and behave coldly towards their children. Hostility and aggression represent parents' resentful and angry feelings toward their children. Indifferent and neglecting parents behaviorally ignore the child's needs. In undifferentiated rejection, even though there is no clear coldness, hostility, or indifference, children believe that their parents do not love or care for them (Rohner, 1986; Rohner et al., 2012).

IPARTheory also has three sub-theories: personality, coping, and sociocultural. *Personality sub-theory* proposes that individuals everywhere react to their perceptions of acceptance or rejection from their attachment figures in the same way, regardless of their sociocultural system, race, or gender. Research about this sub-theory primarily asks two questions. The first question is about the truth of

this assertion, and the second question is about to what degree the effects of rejection in childhood continue in adulthood and old age. *Coping sub-theory* has only one question: Why do some people cope with rejection better than others? *Sociocultural sub-theory* asks why parental behaviors towards children differ, whether there are any psychological, family, or society related factors that are correlated with those parental behaviors; and whether societal factors and beliefs are correlated with acceptance and rejection in childhood (Rohner, 1986; Rohner et al., 2012). In the following paragraphs, only personality sub-theory is explored in depth, as this is the focus of the current study.

Personality Sub-theory

Personality is defined in IPARTheory as individuals' predispositions to respond in life situations and based on the questions mentioned above, personality sub-theory has four assumptions. First, it asserts that when children perceive rejection from significant others they are predisposed to respond emotionally and behaviorally in specific ways. The second assumption is that adults' remembrances of rejection in childhood affects their psychological adjustment. Third, in adulthood, perceived acceptance and rejection from intimate partners functions in the same way as childhood acceptance and rejection from parents. Fourth, psychological adjustment and personality dispositions correlated with acceptance and rejection do not vary based on culture, language, nationality, gender, or other factors (Khaleque et al., 2012).

Psychological adjustment that is correlated with acceptance and rejection is known as Acceptance Rejection Syndrome (ARS). According to ARS, individuals who perceived acceptance from their caregivers develop (a) low hostility/aggression, (b) independence, (c) positive self-esteem, (d) positive self-adequacy, (e) emotional stability, (f) emotional responsiveness and (g) a positive worldview. However, individuals who perceived rejection from their caregivers tend to develop (a) hostility/aggression, (b) dependence or defensive independence, (c) negative self-esteem, (d) negative self-adequacy, (e) emotional instability, (f) emotional unresponsiveness and (g) a negative worldview (Khaleque et al., 2012).

Hostility/aggression consists of all behaviors aimed to harm others on purpose and internal emotions of hate and aggression (Rohner, 2005). *Dependence/defensive independence* reflects an internal desire for getting emotional support, nurturing, and attention from attachment figures. Dependence has nonlinear relationships with maternal and paternal acceptance because when rejection increases, the dependency level typically increases, but at some point, it then turns into defensive independence. For children who perceive serious rejection, expecting love and care from their hostile and/or indifferent parents becomes hurtful; as a defense, these children withdrawn themselves to become more emotionally self-protective and demand less positive response or deny the need for a positive response (Rohner, 1986, 2005; Rohner et al., 2012). The third personality disposition, *self-esteem*,

corresponds to individuals' emotional judgment make about themselves. Rejected people perceive that their parents do not love them, so they think that they are not loveable and develop negative self-esteem. Also, because rejected individuals have a basic need unmet (the need to be loved and accepted), they generalize this feeling further and develop negative *self-adequacy*, believing that they are not good at meeting their own needs (Khaleque et al., 2012). *Emotional responsiveness* is defined as an ability to express their emotions freely and clearly. According to Rohner (1986), children who are rejected by their parents close themselves off emotionally to escape from the pain of being rejected. Also, because they do not learn to love and be loved in their family environment, they have difficulty loving and being loved, even though they want it (Rohner, 1986). *Emotional stability* is a person's ability to emotionally resist minor problems, mistakes, challenges, and stressful situations and to stay emotionally balanced. Rejected individuals tend to show more extreme emotions and behave inconsistently (Rohner, 1986), perceive their lives and relationships as unreliable, hostile, threatening, and dangerous, and therefore they form a *negative worldview* (Khaleque et al., 2012). As mentioned before, IPARTheory focuses on the perceived acceptance rejection from significant others and the possible effects of the perceived acceptance/rejection on individuals. Significant others are ones with whom a child or an adult has a long-term emotional bond and who are not changeable (parents and intimate partners in childhood and adulthood, respectively). However, according to a meta-analytic review, 84% of the research includes only mothers; only in 16% of studies using IPARTheory are fathers included (Rohner et al., 2001).

In many psychological theories, mothers are considered the primary caregivers, which has resulted in mothers being the focus of most parenting research (Lamb, 1975; Li et al., 2017; Lynn, 1974; Palm, 2014). In most of the research, the term "parents" in reality only includes mothers, highlighting the need for research on the possible influence of fathers on children (Coltrane, 1988; Cookston et al., 2006; Daniel et al., 2016; Miranda et al. 2016; Li et al., 2017; Lynn, 1974; Rohner et al., 2001). The behaviors and influence of mothers and fathers are sometimes distinct, but often overlap, so it is equally problematic either to see mothers and fathers as equivalent or to investigate only mothers or only fathers (Amato, 1994; Eggebeen, 2013; Forehand et al., 1993; Jeynes, 2016; Schwartz et al., 2009). In IPARTheory, too, as noted above, most research has focused on mothers, although it has been suggested that both parents should be included in studies (Pleck et al., 2004; Rohner et al., 2001; Sultana et al., 2016; Veneziano, 2003). Consequently, examining not only mothers' but also fathers' possible effects on children would be advantageous.

Research including both mothers and fathers has been inconsistent. In some studies, acceptance from only one parent was a significant predictor of children's outcomes (Schwartz et al., 2009; Sultana et al., 2016; Veneziano, 2000); in some, acceptance from both parents were significant predictors (Finley et al., 2008; Glavak-Tkalić et al., 2014; Sultana et al., 2016; Uddin et al., 2014; Veneziano,

2000); and in some, one parents' influence is greater than the other (Rohner, 2014; Rohner et al., 2001). Many existing studies have examined both fathers' and mothers' influence on children, but few have compared those influences (Li et al., 2017). Thus, more research would be helpful to find both mothers' and fathers' effects on children at the same time.

Another focus in IPARTheory is on psychological adjustment, which typically is measured as an overall score by the Personality Assessment Questionnaire (PAQ) (Khaleque et al., 2005). As a dependent variable, researchers mostly focus on psychological adjustment rather than the subcategories of PAQ. There are lots of correlational research about PAQ's subscales but there is not much research about the predictor role of parental acceptance on PAQ's subscales. In a meta-analytic review conducted by Khaleque and Rohner (2012), the correlational relationships between perceived maternal and paternal acceptance/rejection and the subcategories of psychological adjustment were investigated, and it was found that there are significant correlations between them (as cited in Rohner et al., 2012).

Based on the foregoing discussion, the aim of this study is to specify the associations between perceived paternal and maternal acceptance and children's personality dispositions, and to find whether paternal acceptance mediates the association between maternal acceptance and children's personality dispositions.

Method

Sample

The present study collected data from 592 secondary school students in Istanbul, Turkey using a random sampling method. The participants that had missing data over one item on any scale and more than two items on the entire questionnaire (Rohner et al., 2005) were excluded from the data set via listwise deletion technique. The sample included 272 girls ($\mu = 15.69$; $SD = 1.35$) and 279 boys ($\mu = 15.84$; $SD = 1.25$) with the total of 551 participants. The respondents ranged in age from 11 through 15 years with the mean age of 12.78 ($\mu = 12.78$; $SD = 1.28$).

Measures

Personal Information Form

A personal information form gathered data about participants' age and gender.

Parental Acceptance and Rejection Questionnaire – Mother and Father (Child Short Form)

The Parental Acceptance and Rejection Questionnaire short versions (Rohner et al., 2005) were used to measure the participants' level of perceived maternal and paternal rejection. The PARQ is a self-report instrument designed to measure individuals' perceptions of parental acceptance and rejection.

There are three versions (adult retrospective, parent, and child) of this questionnaire. The Child PARQ used in this study assesses children's, aged between 9 and 17 years, perceptions of their parents' acceptance and rejection behaviors. Data are collected separately about mothers (PARQ-Mothers) and fathers (PARQ-Fathers); items in the two scales are parallel, with only the subjects of the items changing between "my mother" and "my father" (Rohner et al., 2005). The original form consists of 60 items, but the short form has 8 items for warmth/affection ("My mother/father lets me know s/he loves me"), 6 items for hostility/aggression ("My mother/father yells at me when s/he is angry"), 6 items for indifference/neglect ("My mother/father pays no attention to me"), and 4 items for undifferentiated rejection ("My mother/father does not really love me"), for a total of 24 items. Responses range from 1 (*almost never true at all*) to 4 (*almost always true*). Scores of all subscales are summed after reverse scoring the entire warmth/affection subscale, to create an overall measure of perceived coldness/lack of affection (rejection). The higher the score, the more rejection children tend to experience. A score of 60 or higher reveals the child's perception of qualitatively more rejection than acceptance and in this study scores from the PARQ were evaluated as continuous scores.

In the reliability study of the Child PARQ-Short Turkish form (Yılmaz et al., 2008), Cronbach's alpha was found of .89 for mothers and .90 for fathers. Hence, Turkish PARQ-Child short forms (mothers and fathers) consist of homogenous items with a good internal consistency. In this study, the Cronbach's alpha was .82 for reports about both mothers and fathers.

Personality Assessment Questionnaire (Child PAQ).

To assess the children's psychological adjustment in the study, the Personality Assessment Questionnaire (Rohner et al., 2005) was used. The seven personality dispositions which define psychological adjustment was the subscales of the PAQ: hostility/aggression, dependence, self-esteem, self-adequacy, emotional responsiveness, emotional stability, and worldview.

The PAQ has two versions, for adults and children. The Child PAQ was used in this study to assess children's personality dispositions and psychological adjustment. Each subscale has 6 items, for a total of 42 items. Responses range from 1 (*almost never true at all*) to 4 (*almost always true*). Scores are summed across subscales with higher scores representing poorer psychological adjustment. In this study, subscales of PAQ were used and all the scores from PAQ were used as continuous scores, meaning that higher scores on a subscale refers to qualitatively more problems with that personality disposition.

The original PAQ's Cronbach's alpha value is .88 and the subscales' Cronbach's alpha values were between .50 and .74 (Rohner et al., 2005). In this study, the Cronbach's alpha values were .76 for hostility/aggression, .73 for dependence, .68 for negative self-esteem, .75 for negative self-adequacy,

.74 for emotional unresponsiveness, .75 for emotional instability, .65 for negative worldview, and .86 for the total scale.

The reliability-validity study for Turkish PAQ was conducted with 1821 children aged between 10 and 14, Cronbach's alpha values for the subscales ranged between .51 and .78, and for the overall scale the alpha was .81 Erkman (2003).

Procedure

For data collection ethical consent is taken from the university. The research was conducted in classes with voluntary participants during school hours. After a researcher read the questionnaire's instructions, students responded the items independently. The students were told not to write their names on the questionnaire booklet and that their responses would be kept confidential. To cut possible sequence effects, the sequence of the questionnaire items in the booklet was changed. Data collection typically lasted 30-35 minutes in each class.

Results

Before the analyses, the data was screened for outliers and missing data. Participants with missing data on more than one item on any scale and more than two items on the entire questionnaire (Rohner et al., 2005) were excluded from the dataset using listwise deletion. For the other missing data mean substitution method was used. The data was also controlled for non-normality, linearity, and restriction of range. The normality tests showed that normality assumption was violated for the data from Parental Acceptance and Rejection Questionnaire mother and father forms, so inverse transformation method was used to normalize these data. After the data proved adequate characteristics for parametric tests and SEM, other statistical analyses were conducted.

Firstly, Pearson's r Correlation coefficients were calculated to understand the relationships among the variables. As expected, hostility, indifference and undifferentiated dimensions of maternal and paternal acceptance were found to be negatively related with warmth dimensions of both maternal and paternal acceptance scales. A significant and salient correlation was found between maternal acceptance and paternal acceptance ($r = .65, p < .01$), and both maternal acceptance ($r = .57, p < .01$) and paternal acceptance ($r = .52, p < .01$) were correlated with psychological adjustment. These correlation coefficients and others are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Correlations Between Variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Maternal Acceptance	1									
Paternal Acceptance	.659**	1								
Psychological Adjustment	.584**	.526**	1							
Low Hostility/Agression	.422**	.412**	.777**	1						
Dependence	-.014	-.012	.180**	.116**	1					
Positive Self-Esteem	.395**	.310**	.618**	.336**	-.148**	1				
Positive Self-Adequacy	.482**	.448**	.688**	.390**	-.105*	.554**	1			
Emotional Responsiveness	.483**	.402**	.664**	.348**	-.151**	.453**	.530**	1		
Emotional Stability	.358**	.338**	.745**	.649**	.106*	.291**	.347**	.328**	1	
Positive Worldview	.497**	.449**	.799**	.566**	-.010	.439**	.457**	.504**	.530**	1

*p<.05, **p<.001

To see the associations among maternal acceptance, paternal acceptance and personality dispositions Structural Equation Modelling was conducted by using IBM SPSS AMOS 18.0 software package (Arbuckle, 2009). The subdimensions for both maternal and paternal acceptance and rejection scales which were also taken as latent variables in the analysis: warmth/affection, hostility/aggression, indifference/neglect, and undifferentiated rejection scores were taken into consideration as seen variables. For the endogenous latent variable personality dispositions/psychological adjustment; the scores for hostility/aggression, dependence, self-esteem, self-adequacy, emotional instability, emotional unresponsiveness, and worldview were used as saw variables. Structural Equation Modeling was preferred to Multiple Regression Analysis and Path Analysis as it simultaneously shows the relations among observed variables and latent variables and also considers the suppression effects and gives the correct size for estimates by controlling the part and partial correlations (Kline, 2011; Schumacker et al., 2010). As our aim was to see the mediating role of paternal acceptance and rejection between maternal acceptance and youths' personality dispositions our exogenous variable was maternal acceptance and rejection; paternal acceptance and rejection was analyzed as an endogenous variable between maternal acceptance and rejection and personality dispositions/psychological adjustment variables as a mediating variable; and personality dispositions/psychological adjustment was placed in the model as the endogenous dependent variable. The theorized model of the research is presented in the figure 1 below. In the analysis, the covariance matrix was analyzed by using maximum likelihood method of estimation and we firstly evaluated the model fit by using Chi-Square and the ratio of Chi-Square to Degrees of Freedom (X^2/df). As the Chi-Square value is sensitive to the sample size for the larger sample sizes, Kline (2016) advice to

consider the ratio between Chi-Square and Degrees of Freedom (X^2/df) for the model fit. Moreover, for the other fit indexes, The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), The Standard Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR), the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), the Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), the Normed Fit Index (NFI) and Tucker Lewis Index (TLI) were also evaluated. In SEM literature it is usually accepted that CMIN/DF less than 3 shows a good fit between the model and the observed data. CFI, GFI, NFI and TLI values larger than .95, and RMSEA and SRMR values less than .05 show good fit with the model and the observed data (Kline, 2011; Schumacker et al., 2010).

Figure 1

Theoretical model

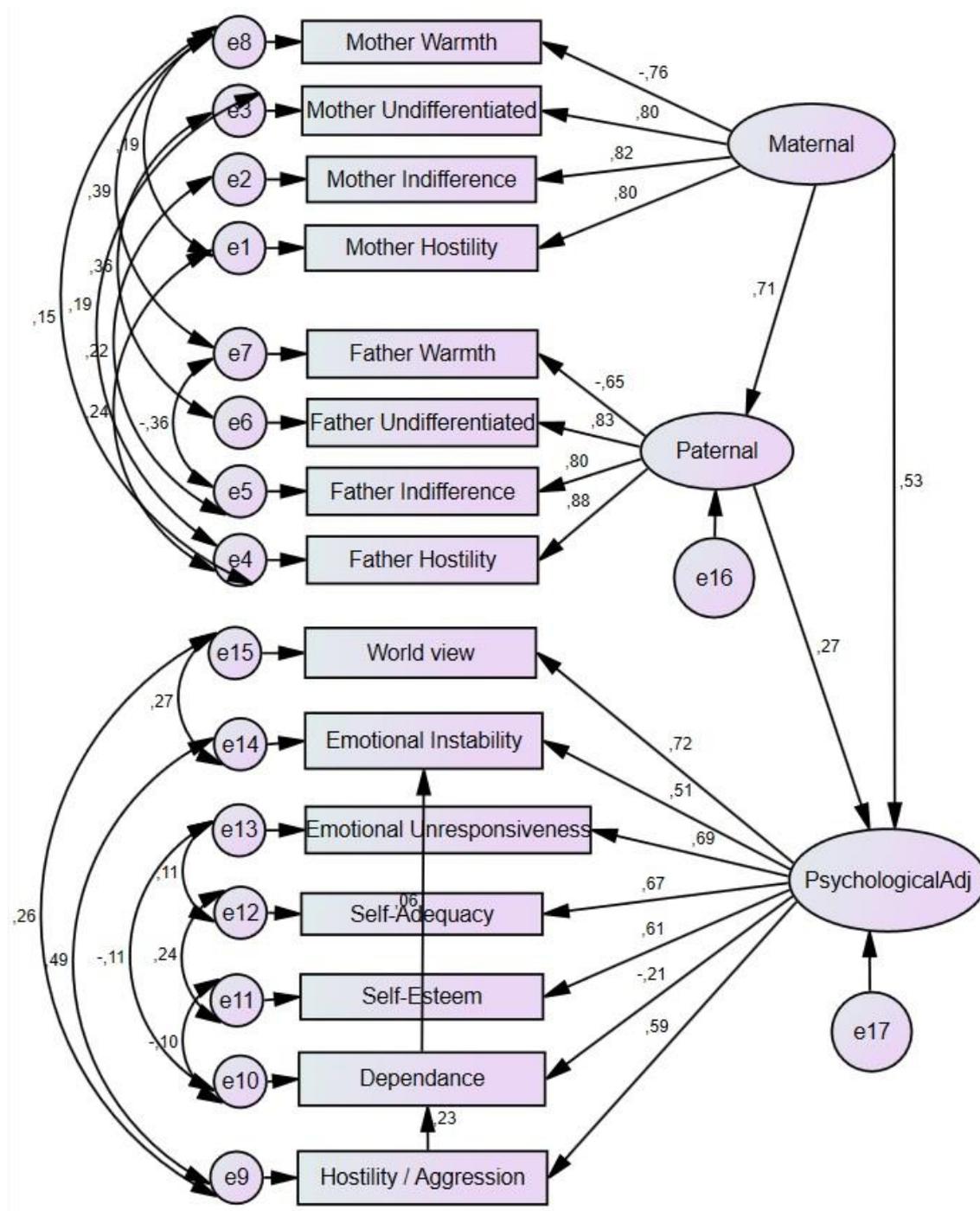


Theoretical Model:

The theoretical model above (Figure 1) was evaluated with the observed variables and their error terms, and our preliminary model did not show a good fit with the data, so considering the suggestions of the modification indexes the model was improved. The suggestions of the modification indexes that were in congruence with the theory were taken into consideration and mainly these changes were related with the covariances between the error terms of the observed variables that are mainly measured under the same latent variables. Although the significance of X^2 value, the estimates of the finalized model showed a good fit with our data as can be seen in the main fit indexes presented in Table 2 below and the ratio of chi-square value to degrees of freedom was less than 3 showing that the finalized model acceptably fit the data. ($X^2 = 144.168$, $df = 70$, $p < .05$ and $CMIN / DF = 2.060$).

Figure 2

Modified Model that Fits the Data



Model fit indexes show how the sample variance–covariance data fit the structural equation model that we generated. Besides X^2 and X^2 / Df values Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Standard Mean Square Residual Index (SRMR) are widely preferred by researchers. Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) and Normed Fit Index (NFI) and Comparative Fit Index (CFI) are used for comparing alternative models and are generally given in SEM results. (Schumacker et al., 2010). In the Table 2 below the fit index's values derived from our final model are presented with the fit criteria mentioned in SEM literature. As can

be seen in the Table 2, the fit indexes values are as follows: GFI = 0.966, CFI = 0.983, RMSA = 0.044, SRMR = 0.031, NFI = 0.967, TLI = 0.974; and these values are in congruence with the values of good fit criteria.

Table 2

The Fit Indexes of the Finalized Model of the SEM results for all participants:

Fit Indexes	Good Fit	Acceptable Fit	Value	Interpretation
X ²			144,168	
df			70	
X ² /df	<2	<3	2.060	Good Fit
GFI	>0.95	0,90< GFI<0,95	0.966	Good Fit
CFI	>0.95	0,90< CFI<0,95	0.983	Good Fit
RMSA	<0.05	0,05<RMSA<0,10	0.044	Good Fit
SRMR	<0.05	0,05<RMSA<0,08	0.031	Good Fit
NFI	>0.95	0,90<NFI<0,95	0.967	Good Fit
TLI	>0.95	0,90< TLI<0,95	0.974	Good Fit

The Standardized and Unstandardized Estimates for our finalized model are given in Table 3 below. As can be seen in the table the associations between Maternal Acceptance and Paternal Acceptance ($\beta = .715, p < .001$), Maternal Acceptance and Psychological Adjustment ($\beta = .531, p < .001$), and Paternal Acceptance and Psychological Adjustment ($\beta = .268, p < .001$) are highly significant. These beta values are also the standardized direct effects for the paths mentioned between the variables in Table 3. Moreover, Hostility dimension of Personality Dispositions/Psychological Adjustment could significantly predict Dependence dimension of Personality Dispositions/Psychological Adjustment ($\beta = .227, p < .001$). The other estimates about the associations among other observed and latent variables are presented in the Table 3.

Table 3

Maximum Likelihood Estimates for SEM analysis showing the Relationship between Maternal Acceptance, Paternal Acceptance and Youths' Personality Dispositions

	Paths	Unstandardized	SE	Standardized
Maternal →	Paternal	,916***	,057	,715***
Maternal →	Psychological Adj	,556***	,077	,531***
Paternal →	Psychological Adj	,219***	,053	,268***
Psychological Adj →	Hostility	1,000		,588
Psychological Adj →	Dependence	-,314**	,100	-,208**
Hostility →	Dependence	,201***	,050	,227***
Maternal →	Maternal hostility	1,000		,804
Maternal →	Maternal indifference	1,025***	,051	,819***
Maternal →	Maternal undifferentiated	,726***	,037	,795***
Paternal →	Paternal hostility	1,000		,882
Paternal →	Paternal indifference	,940***	,042	,796***
Paternal →	Paternal undifferentiated	,609***	,026	,827***
Paternal →	Paternal warmth	-1,083***	,065	-,648***
Maternal →	Maternal warmth	-1,364***	,078	-,757***
Psychological Adj →	Self esteem	,766***	,074	,609***
Psychological Adj →	Self-adequacy	,976***	,091	,667***
Psychological Adj →	Em. unresponsiveness	1,075***	,097	,689***
Psychological Adj →	Em. instability	,879***	,068	,513***
Psychological Adj →	Worldview	1,349***	,098	,717***
Dependence →	Em. instability	,067	,037	,059

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Indirect effects were evaluated according to AMOS output and SOBEL tests. As it can be seen in both Figure and Table, both Maternal Acceptance and Paternal acceptance affected personality dispositions/psychological adjustment. This shows that maternal acceptance had both direct and indirect effects on psychological adjustment. A Sobel test was also conducted to inspect whether paternal acceptance significantly puts across the indirect effect of maternal acceptance to psychological adjustment and SOBEL test approved that paternal acceptance functioned as a partial mediator between maternal acceptance and personality dispositions/psychological adjustment (Sobel

= 5.442, SE = 0.053 $p < .001$). For the indirect effects of maternal acceptance via paternal acceptance on hostility (Sobel = 4.852, SE = 0.013, $p < .001$), self-adequacy (Sobel = 4.422, SE = 0.011, $p < .05$), emotional unresponsiveness (Sobel = 2.902, SE = 0.011, $p < .001$), emotional instability (Sobel = 3.448, SE = 0.013, $p < .001$) and worldview (Sobel = 4.340, SE = 0.014, $p < .001$), the Sobel tests results were statistically significant confirming that paternal acceptance acted as a partial mediator between maternal acceptance and these variables. For dependence and self-esteem dimensions of personality dispositions the Sobel results were insignificant. As it can be seen in the model that fit the data paternal acceptance is indirectly related with dependence via hostility and this was also approved by the Sobel test (Sobel = 2.935, SE = 0.006, $p < .01$). However, the Sobel test for the mediating effect of dependence between hostility/aggression and emotional instability was statistically insignificant and this result is incongruence with the maximum likelihood estimates for the relationship between dependence and emotional stability in Table 4.

Table 4

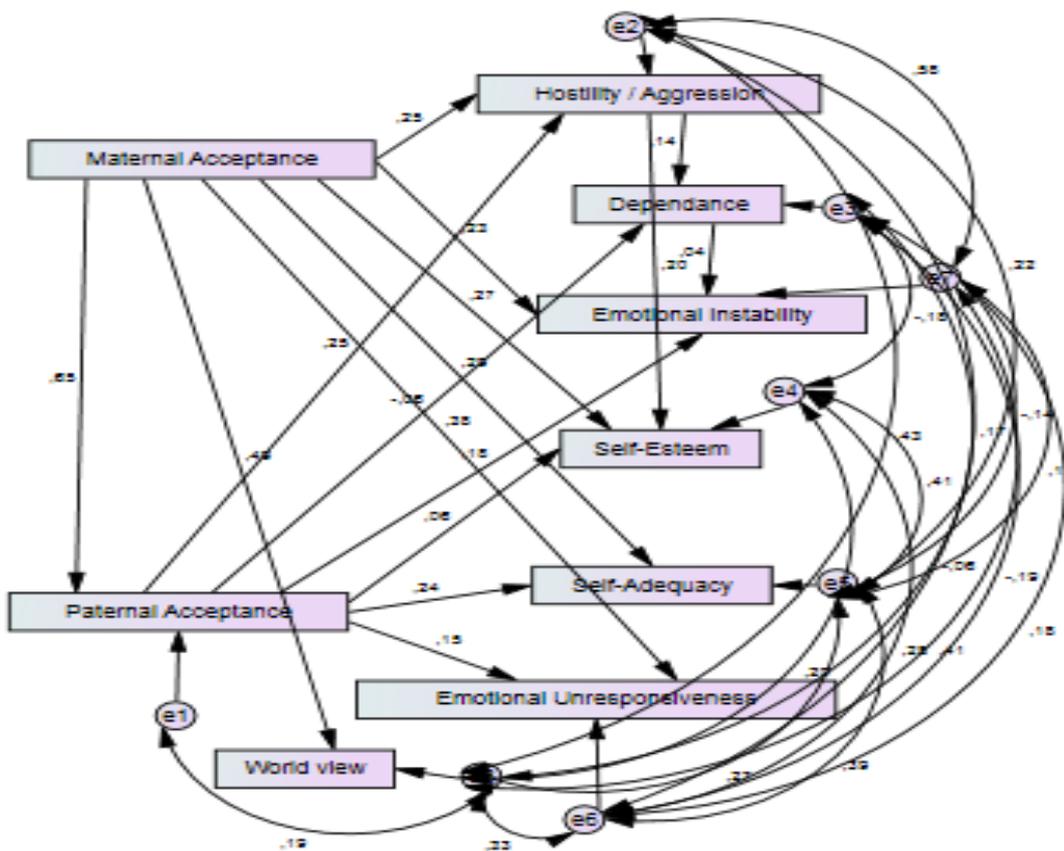
Standardized Indirect Effects in the Model

	Maternal Acceptance	Paternal Acceptance	Pers. Disp/Psychological Adj.	Hostility
Pers. Disp/Psychological Adj.	.192			
Hostility	.425	.158		
Dependence	-.054	-.020	.133	
Worldview	.518	.192		
Emotional Instability	.367	.136	-.004	.013
Emotional Unresponsiveness	.498	.185		
Self-Adequacy	.482	.179		
Self-Esteem	.440	.163		
Paternal Warmth	-.463			
Paternal Undifferentiated	.591			
Paternal Indifference	.569			
Paternal Hostility	.630			

To understand the associations among maternal acceptance, paternal acceptance and the subdimensions of the personality dispositions/psychological adjustment and to see the maximum likelihood estimates from maternal and paternal acceptance to those subdimensions we also conducted a path analysis. The finalized path analysis that fit our data was shown in Figure 1.

Figure 3

Path Analysis among Maternal Acceptance, Paternal Acceptance, and Sub-dimensions of Personality Dispositions / Psychological Adjustment



As it can be seen in the Table below the path model in the figure above has yielded good and acceptable fit indexes. The chi-square result for the model fit was insignificant ($X^2 = 5,730, p = 0.057$), and the ratio of chi-square to degrees of freedom was less than 3 ($X^2/df = 2$) showing that the path model in the above figure and the data was well-matched. Also, other fit indexes such as GFI = .998, CFI = .998, SRMR = .012, NFI = .997 and TLI = .963 were showing that the data and the finalized path model had good fit. Only RMSA = .058 was a little bit higher, however according to the SEM literature the RMSA result we derived was in the acceptable range, showing that the path model can be accepted to fit our data.

Table 5

The Fit Indexes of the Finalized Model of the Path Analysis results for all participants.

Fit Indexes	Good Fit	Acceptable Fit	Value	Interpretation
X ²			5,730	
Df			2	
X ² /df	<2	<3	2,865	Good Fit
GFI	>0,95	0,90< GFI<0,95	0,998	Good Fit
CFI	>0,95	0,90< CFI<0,95	0,998	Good Fit
RMSA	<0,05	0,05<RMSA<0,10	0,058	Acceptable Fit
SRMR	<0,05	0,05<SRMR<0,08	0,012	Good Fit
NFI	>0,95	0,90<NFI<0,95	0,997	Good Fit
TLI	>0,95	0,90< TLI<0,95	0,963	Good Fit

The Standardized and Unstandardized Estimates for our finalized model path model are given in Table 6 below. As it is shown on the Table both maternal and paternal acceptance were found to be significantly related with hostility, self-adequacy, emotional instability, and emotional unresponsiveness dimensions of personality dispositions/psychological adjustment. Both maternal and paternal acceptance did not show direct associations with dependence dimension of personality dispositions/psychological adjustment; and hostility was found to be related with dependence ($\beta = .141, p < .01$) and self-esteem ($\beta = .201, p < .001$). The estimates for the paths from maternal acceptance to self-esteem ($\beta = .272, p < .001$) and world view ($\beta = .486, p < .01$) dimensions of personality dispositions/psychological adjustment were statistically significant however, this was not the case for paternal acceptance. The other maximum likelihood estimates for the path analysis are presented in the table 6 below.

Table 6

Maximum Likelihood Estimates for Path analysis showing the Relationship between Maternal Acceptance, Paternal Acceptance and Youths' Personality Dispositions

Paths		Unstandardized	SE	Standardized
Maternal Acceptance→	Paternal Acceptance	,766***	,038	,651***
Maternal Acceptance→	Hostility	,100***	,020	,248***
Paternal Acceptance→	Hostility	,085***	,017	,249***
Paternal Acceptance→	Dependence	-,019	,014	-,061
Hostility →	Dependence	,125**	,041	,141**
Maternal Acceptance→	Self-esteem	,081***	,015	,272***
Maternal Acceptance→	Self-adequacy	,101***	,017	,291***
Maternal Acceptance→	Em. unresponsiveness	,139***	,018	,376***
Maternal Acceptance→	Worldview	,217***	,017	,486***
Paternal Acceptance→	Em. instability	,062***	,018	,180***
Paternal Acceptance→	Self-esteem	,015	,013	,058
Paternal Acceptance→	Self-adequacy	,070***	,014	,237***
Paternal Acceptance→	Em. unresponsiveness	,047**	,015	,149**
Maternal Acceptance→	Em. instability	,092***	,021	,226***
Hostility →	Self esteem	,149***	,032	,201***
Dependence →	Em. instability	,044	,037	,039

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Discussion

This study examines the associations between parental acceptance and rejection and children's personality dispositions (subcategories of psychological adjustment) because as mentioned in literature review it was seen that there is limited information about this issue.

The findings of the present study mostly support the premises of Interpersonal Acceptance Rejection Theory that there is an association between perceived maternal and paternal acceptance and children's adjustment. In this study, this claim is supported with the finding that there is a significant relationship between perceived maternal and paternal acceptance and children's personality dispositions, except for dependence. This result supports the related literature. In a meta-analysis, thirty-six studies conducted from 1975 to 2010 with children were reviewed and results showed that both maternal and paternal acceptance have significant correlation with children's personality dispositions, except for

dependence, in all cultures (Khaleque et al., 2012). The probable reason for dependence being non significantly correlated with acceptance and rejection may be the non-linear relationship between those variables as mentioned in literature review.

In this study, paternal acceptance was found to be a partial mediator of the association between maternal acceptance and the five of children's personality dispositions: low hostility/aggression, positive self-adequacy, emotional responsiveness, emotional stability, and positive worldview. This finding shows that for those dispositions, paternal acceptance partially explains the association between maternal acceptance and these outcomes, but for the other disposition (positive self-esteem) maternal acceptance is the only predictor. There has been not previous research that investigated this mediating role; however, this result supports research that had found mothers sometimes have a greater impact on children than fathers and also supports research that emphasizes the importance of fathers' impact on children (Amato, 1994; Eggebeen, 2013; Forehand, 1993; Jeynes, 2016).

As mentioned in literature review, research that had investigated the subdimensions of psychological adjustment are rare. In that rare research the researchers had focused on the relationship between personality dispositions and acceptance rejection rather than investigating the predictor role of acceptance rejection on those personality dispositions (Berenson et al., 2005). For example, in research with a sample of young adults' positive self-esteem had been found correlated with paternal acceptance more than maternal acceptance while in other research self-esteem had been found more correlated with maternal behaviors as parallel with this research (Kuterovac-Jagodić et al., 1997). The finding that fathers had no effect on children's self-esteem can be explained by the fact that toward adolescence the relationship between children and fathers starts to be based on authority and respect and so interactions between them decrease, therefore fathers cannot give feedback enough to the children (Sunar, 2002).

Results of this study contribute to the issue of the relative importance of fathers versus mothers for child development because this is still under debate (Li et al., 2017). Fathers and mothers were often found to both predict child adjustment significantly to varying degrees and paternal and maternal acceptance often found to be jointly contribute through interaction with each other (Li et al., 2017) and this is supported by paternal acceptance being a partial mediator on the relationship between maternal acceptance and child outcomes in this study.

Paternal acceptance being a partial mediator on the relationship between maternal acceptance and most of the child outcomes in this study also supports the fact that fathers are important contributors for children development. Mothers have been the default persons to be included in child development research for a long time and over the past few decades both mothers and fathers are included in research (Li et al., 2017; Rohner et al., 2001).

Additionally, the meta-analytic review by Rohner and Khaleque (2012) provided robust evidence supporting the association between perceived parental acceptance and psychological adjustment of children and adults across cultures. Their findings further validate the results of this study, reinforcing the notion that parental acceptance plays a crucial role in shaping children's psychological well-being. Furthermore, the work of Rohner and Britner (2002) sheds light on the global mental health correlates of parental acceptance-rejection, underscoring the importance of parental attitudes in influencing children's mental health outcomes. This broader perspective highlights the significance of parental acceptance-rejection in a cross-cultural context, echoing the findings of this study.

Lastly, the introduction to parental acceptance-rejection theory by Khaleque et al., (2012) provides a comprehensive overview of the theoretical framework, research methods, empirical evidence, and implications of parental acceptance-rejection theory. This foundational work enriches the understanding of the mechanisms underlying the association between parental acceptance-rejection and children's psychological adjustment, offering valuable insights for future research and intervention efforts.

Limitations and Suggestions

This study has two strengths that should be noted. First, this study aimed to contribute to the literature by showing the differences between mothers and fathers' impact on children. The second strength is investigating the subcategories of psychological adjustment (personality dispositions).

There also are some limitations of the study. First limitation is that all the measurements are self-report questionnaires from the children's perspective. Hence for further research it would be helpful to use distinct kinds of measurement techniques and different reporters. Using convenience sampling is also a limitation in order to representation of population and limited generalizability. In order to contribute to the subject for future research to ensure the reliability and validity alternative sampling techniques should be considered.

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